

## RUSSIA. AND THE WEST IN IRAN

brandies was spread in major cities throughout the entire country, particularly in the northern Soviet-occupied zone. Tabriz, Zanzan, Ardebil, Maragheh, Maku, Rezaieh, Khoi, Meshed, Semnan, Shah-rud, Damghan, and Qazvin figured prominently in the Tudeh press reports as centers of the party's activities. In the south the most important gain for the Tudeh was the organization of labor in Isfahan textile factories. The party's influence even reached some distant places on the Persian Gulf coast. Attempts were made to influence labor employed by the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, but the British authorities resisted strongly. Eventually, however, the Anglo-Iranian Company felt the impact of the Tudeh agitation. Quite naturally the party focused attention on organizing industrial workers. Trade unionism was encouraged and a central trade union organization was established in Teheran. The leadership of the latter overlapped to such an extent with the central authorities of the Tudeh that it became difficult, for all practical purposes, to distinguish between the two organizations. The number of party members was not officially disclosed. Government estimates were modest. According to them, the party numbered no more than three thousand members. At the other extreme were reports that the party numbered two hundred thousand, with *Rahbar* claiming forty thousand for Teheran alone.<sup>33</sup> Although party regulations provided for subscriptions of 10 rials per month per male member and of 15 rials per female or child member,<sup>39</sup> it is doubtful whether these rules were strictly followed, and therefore whether it was possible to distinguish between members in good standing and mere sympathizers.

Actually the party's numerical strength could best be measured by the number of those willing to take part in party-sponsored demonstrations. These demonstrations ranged from simple strikes of factory hands to bloody riots definitely political in character. Naturally the party possessed a hard inner core of seasoned Communists. Some of them were veterans of the heroic period under the Reza Shah regime. Others were brought at one time or another from Russia.<sup>40</sup> There is no

ss *Rahbar*, July 8, 1943.

39 *Ra\*d-i-Emruz*, April 27, 1944.

\*»In 1938 about 3,500 Iranians, mostly Azerbaijani Turks, re-emigrated to Iran from the Soviet Union. In contrast to the 8,000-strong Mussavatist emigration